

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please accept amended claims 1, 2, 11, 18, and 19 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for representing a user within an online environment comprising the steps of:

defining a plurality of environmental parameters for controlling user interaction;

defining a plurality of user representation parameters of user data within the environment;

capturing user data from the user;

~~building~~ displaying an abstract graphical display of the environment to the user; and

~~building~~ displaying a user representation within the abstract graphical display

incorporating the user data to the user.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of defining the environmental parameters comprises:

determining an environmental structure;

governing user interaction within the environment according to the user parameters and the environmental structure; and

displaying an abstract graphical cue of a first ~~user~~-parameter of the user in the abstract graphical display of the environmental-structure, wherein the abstract graphical cue moves through the abstract graphical display of the environment according to a second ~~user~~ parameter of the user to provide a second abstract graphical cue.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the environmental structure is one of an auction, a queue of users, a chat room, a conference room, a news group, an online help desk, and a business interface.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of defining the user representation based on a user profile.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the user data is captured from a user's device registered with a social proxy providing service.
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the user data is captured from a user's activity within the online environment, wherein the user data is abstracted to provide the user representation.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein user data is updated periodically.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the user navigates the abstract graphical display by selecting an object to reveal information about the object.
9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the object is an element represented in the abstract graphical display, comprising associated data.
10. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the information is one of a hierarchical relationship, content of a compound data object, a zoomed view, and user information.

11. (Currently Amended) A method for representing a social proxy ~~in an abstract graphical display~~ comprising the steps of:

~~defining~~ displaying an abstract graphical display of the social proxy for a virtual environment and facilitating user interaction, wherein the abstract graphical display is a geometric shape;

defining a user proxy for a user, the user proxy having updatable variables;

displaying the user proxy within the abstract graphical display of the social proxy; and

updating user proxy variables periodically.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, wherein the social proxy is defined by a provider and the user proxy is defined by an abstraction of the updatable variables.

13. (Original) The method of claim 11, further comprises the steps of:

defining a proxy for a provider; and

displaying the provider within the social proxy.

14. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the provider is the user.

15. (Original) The method of claim 11, further includes the step of displaying a link to a second social proxy.

16. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the social proxy is one of a plurality of social proxies within a hierarchical system of proxies.

17. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the social proxy is used interactively by the user with an application, the application is an extension of the social proxy.

18. (Currently Amended) ~~The M~~method of claim 11, ~~wherein the step of displaying the user proxy,~~ further comprises comprising limiting data displayed displaying a portion of the abstract graphical display of the social proxy based on a user's access credentials.

19. (Currently Amended) A computer-based medium having stored programs readable by a computer for causing the computer to execute method steps for facilitating the presentation of an environment in graphical form comprising a processor for receiving information from a plurality of users and presenting said information in a graphical form to the plurality of users, wherein the plurality of users communicate user data to the processor for incorporation in the graphical environment as user proxies, the user data is abstracted to provide the user proxy comprising an abstract graphical cue of a first parameter of the user data, wherein the abstract graphical cue moves through the graphical environment according to a second parameter of the user data to provide a second abstract graphical cue.

20. (Original) The computer-based medium according to claim 19, wherein the environment can be one of a physical environment, a virtual environment, and a combined physical and virtual environment.